

## Hebrews 10:19-25 – Belgic Confession 28 – “Why Join the Church?”

Introduction: **Because we have access to God in Christ, we enjoy the benefits of assembling with his people.**

### 1) Drawing Near With Confidence

- The “Therefore” at the beginning of this passage refers to the fact that Jesus has been identified as superior to the Old Testament sacrificial system. In the Old Testament the only way God could dwell among his people was if they were kept away from him by heavy curtains (Exodus 25-26). The weakness of the system is shown in the fact that the sacrifices had to be offered continually.
- Jesus give his people permanent access through a new and living way. Better than the blood of animals, which only looked forward to cleansing, he actually gives cleansing to his people. Better than the animals who were killed and remained dead, he was killed, but is now alive, and is seated at the Father’s right hand.
- The people of Christ have been given access to the Father. When we believe in him, we are taking hold of that access. We must have confidence that we are right with God because of his perfect work.

### 2) Confessing Our Hope

- Once we know the truth of what we get in Jesus, we must hold fast to that hope, and this is what we do in the church! We are the assembly of the saved. The church is the place where God’s people gather. It is here God’s saving grace is dispensed in the preaching of the gospel, and it is here that we are spiritually fed so that we will not waver.
- To receive this food, we unite ourselves to the church, and we defend the unity of the church. We become parts of the body, but often we can harm that unity, particularly by thinking we are more important than the family God has chosen for us.

### 3) Encouraging Good Works

- We have a sure hope that we are cleansed from sin, and this drives us to respond in good works. Growing in holiness isn’t easy, it takes thought and effort, and it is something that we must help each other with. We figure out how to help each other do good works!
- It is important to note, that when we, even the preacher, tell each other how we should live, it is not because the speaker is holier. You don’t have to earn the right. We speak because God has spoken, and we open the scriptures and show each other where we go wrong. This is on God’s authority, and not our own.
- We also use our talents to help our brothers and sisters in whatever way we can. We ought to think about what gifts and talents we have that we can use to benefit others in the church, because if one part of the body doesn’t get the help it needs, we all suffer!
- We live in the last days, the days before Christ returns. This means that we expect him to return soon, and so being together is much more important. Furthermore, we also expect that the world will put pressure on the church. However, we remain joined to the church because this is where God has promised to work in us, and where we have been given people that we can love and serve in response.